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TAGS: KNNP MNUC PARM PTER PINR PREL ASEC KCRM BE XG XT
SUBJECT: SELECTION OF UNITED STATES CO-CHAIR TO THE
INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON NUCLEAR SMUGGLING

¶1. (U) This is an action request for Embassy Brussels.
Please see paragraph 3.

¶2. (SBU) BACKGROUND: The United States and the European Union co-chair the International Technical Working Group on Nuclear Smuggling (ITWG). The G8 established the ITWG in response to a raft of nuclear smuggling incidents in the mid-1990s. The group has become the most active multilateral mechanism for nuclear forensics cooperation worldwide. The current United States Co-Chair, Dr. David Smith, is taking a new assignment with the International Atomic Energy Agency in November and the letter in para 4 informs the EU representative that oversees the ITWG of our selection and desire to inform the ITWG Executive Board.

¶3. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: Washington requests that Post provide a copy of the letter in para 4 to Ms. Annalisa Giannella, Personal Representative on Nonproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Council of the European Union, and confirm that the European Union is comfortable with Washington's plans to inform the ITWG Executive Board of the United States' selection.

¶4. (SBU) LETTER OF SELECTION: (Complementary Opening)

Begin text of letter:

Ms. Annalisa Giannella
Personal Representative on Nonproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction,
Council of the European Union,
Rue de la Loi, 175 B-1048 Brussels

Dear Ms. Giannella:

The United States greatly values its partnership with the European Union in leading the International Technical Working Group on Nuclear Smuggling (ITWG). Since the G8 established the ITWG in 1995, it has been critical in building forensics capabilities, identifying best practices, and fostering cooperation, which are central to our common efforts to promote nuclear security and nonproliferation.

In July, the IAEA selected the current U.S. Co-Chair of the ITWG, Dr. David Smith, to help its efforts to promote nuclear forensics cooperation. However, Dr. Smith is vacating his position at the ITWG. We are heartened by the IAEA's confidence in Dr. Smith, and we have recently completed a process to identify a new U.S. Co-Chair.

After careful consideration of many highly qualified candidates, Dr. Benjamin Garrett is the clear choice. Dr. Garrett possesses an excellent forensics background, demonstrated experience leading international scientific collaborations, and has been a valued participant in past ITWG events. As the Senior Scientist for the FBI Laboratory, Dr. Garrett will bring useful law enforcement experience to the ITWG. In addition, he has done outstanding work as

Chairman of the U.S.-Canada Scientific Working Group on the Forensic Analysis of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Terrorism, which develops best practices for laboratory and operational aspects related to forensic analysis of CBRN materials.

The G8's investment in the ITWG has provided governments better tools to counter smuggling, but its full potential has not yet been reached. Dr. Garrett's background in science and law enforcement will help the ITWG, with continued EU leadership, to make further meaningful differences in nuclear security and nonproliferation.

With your concurrence, I will inform the ITWG Executive Board of Dr. Garrett's selection in the coming weeks.

Very respectfully,

C.S. Eliot Kang
Acting Assistant Secretary
Bureau of International Security & Nonproliferation
United States Department of State

End text of letter.

(Complementary Closing)

¶5. (SBU) REPORTING DEADLINE: Washington requests that Post respond via front-channel cable no later than October 2, 2009.

¶6. (U) Washington appreciates Post's assistance. Please contact Aryn Weinberg in ISN/WMDT at WeinbergAB@state.gov or 202-736-7695 for additional information.

CLINTON